

THE SATURDAY REVIEW

NUMBER 4307

23 APRIL, 1938

SIXPENCE

MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S determination to open negotiations with Italy without mounting the high horse, that unruly charger which unseated Mr. Eden, has been justified not only by the conclusion of an Agreement which has been enthusiastically received in both countries, but also by the promptness with which the French Government have followed our example. No Mediterranean settlement can be complete without an amicable arrangement between France and Italy. Latin nations have never found it easy to get on with one another. They know too much about one another's weaknesses. Yet every material and moral interest should draw France and Italy together and it is clear that France could not possibly stand out against the recognition of the Italian Empire, when Great Britain has taken the lead in raising the question before the League of Nations. Communication with Africa is as vital to France as it is to Italy and the political difficulties between the two nations were a serious danger to European peace. For disagreement in the Mediterranean was bound to react elsewhere. The problem of the Jibuti railway which was financed by French money is one that affects Italy very closely and a settlement which would satisfy the French shareholders would be of great value to the development of Ethiopia.

WITH ALL THE PANOPLY of modern advertisement, with the beating of drums and the mobilisation of every scientific device to ensure unanimity, Hitler, with the aid of that remarkable publicity agent, Herr Goebbels, secured a majority of over 99 per cent. It is amusing to note, as a correspondent points out in the *Times*, that in the matter of plebiscites, Napoleon Bonaparte, with none of the adventitious aids of modern publicity and only the spell of his name and personality, still stands supreme. In 1799 the plebiscite held to confirm the Constitution and his election as the first of three consuls showed over three million Ayes and 1,562 Noes, about one Frenchman in 2,000 voting No. In 1802 the nation confirmed his election as Consul for life by 3,568,885 against 8,374, about one in 400 voting No. In Austria Hitler had one person in about 380 voting against him and in Germany and Austria one in 100.

IN ANY OTHER WAR than the civil war in Spain an end to bloodshed might be prophesied in the near future, but a civil war differs from all other conflicts and the Spaniards are an exceptional people. The Government side began with a policy of blood and murder. Many English people have friends and relations who were on those death lists, which would have become realities if General Franco had raised his standard forty-eight hours later. Reprisals were inevitable, and to-day those who have their backs against the

wall prefer to die fighting to facing the firing squad. The Spaniard has in this life been always so other-worldly that death has counted with him far less than with nations who can conceive of nothing beyond what the eyes can see and the senses grasp. At any rate, it is clear that victory is in General Franco's hands, and no intervention short of general war can wrest it from him. Surely humanity should persuade our pacifists and revolutionaries to pray for his speedy victory and to oppose any measures that may prolong this cruel struggle.

THE AUSTRALIANS have arrived, and the enormous interest taken in their advent may be gauged by the news and photographs that have been duly chronicling their progress in the long voyage from Down-under. Don Bradman in shipboard fancy dress, or seen seated playing cards or imbibing cooling liquid, may not present a very formidable appearance, but no one who has once seen him treating the best of our bowlers as if they were second-rate performers is likely to be soothed by these pleasant shipboard pictures into thinking that he will carry this apparent off-stage mildness on to our cricketing fields. He and his team will be out, as ever, for the rigour of the game, ruthless in their attitude to English cricketing reputations in their will to win. And they will not be an easy side to beat. Bradman may be the principal Star, but the lesser Stars of the team are of considerable magnitude. If there is no Grimmett this time, there is the even more menacing O'Reilly to lead the attack, with the Spinner Ward, the left-hand "googly" expert Fleetwood-Smith and the "demon" McCormick to help him scatter English wickets. And if Ponsford and Woodfull are not here this year to open the Australian batting and provide an extremely tough first-wicket combination, Bradman and McCabe will still have to be dealt with, and they will certainly not lack the assistance of very competent batsmen to second their own efforts. With the Australians present in our midst, the prospects for the coming cricketing season seem bright indeed—always provided, of course, that the weather proves kind to our visitors and ourselves. For the rest, everyone will join in according the Australians the warmest of welcomes and wishing them the very best of good luck—even if we also secretly nourish the hope that our Selection Committee may confound its ever-carping critics by discovering English talent good enough to win three at least of the five Tests.

THE ROYAL NAVY holds its great national "At Home" or Navy Week during the important August Bank Holiday Week, beginning on the Saturday prior to the holiday (July 30) and continuing all through the week at Ports-

mouth, Chatham and Plymouth. This "once-a-year" opportunity has now become a great festival, over 400,000 paying their shilling last year to see the ships, the dockyards and the special displays that were devised for their interest and education. Navy Week has two purposes: to give the people of this country the opportunity of getting into close touch with the wonders of their Fleet which means so much to the Empire, and by so doing to assist Naval charities. It is to be hoped that this year Navy Week will prove to be even more popular than it has hitherto done.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA'S Government made a fine deal out of its so-called gamble in buying up the mining royalties in the Colony. There was at the time much adverse comment in the Colony over the Government's action. The gamble has proved a profitable one, for the State is now receiving a return of 9 per cent. on its £2,000,000 investment. Since the purchase, though not because of it, practically every branch of the mining industry has progressed. Each successive year has been a record. In six years the number of Europeans employed has more than doubled, while the number of natives has risen from 35,200 to 90,440. Employment on such a scale has meant much to the Colony's exports, imports and the demand for local agricultural products.

INFLUENZA OR FLU is a term which the average layman is perhaps too ready to apply to any form of distressing cold from which he is suffering. It gives his malady a certain dignity and distinction which perhaps consoles him in some degree for its unpleasantness. Perhaps, therefore, it is a little unkind of the Medical Research Council to afford such convincing scientific proof that influenza and feverish colds (febrile catarrhs) are two very different things. In the one case virus can be "repeatedly and with ease" recovered; in the other it cannot. Unfortunately, it would appear from the Council's report that there is more than one kind of influenza, for the strains of the virus recovered have been found to display "antigenic differences." And even more unfortunate is the fact, which this report makes clear, that medical research has, for all its intensive study of the disease both in the epidemic of 1936-37 and before, so far failed to find a thoroughly effective means of preventing any future influenza epidemic through immunisation of those exposed to infection. The one comforting reflection is that the progress hitherto made in isolating the virus gives some promise of discovering in the not too distant future "the composite agent" medical research is still looking out for as a preventive of this complicated disease.

"POWER AND GLORY," by Karel Capek, at the Savoy Theatre, is an intelligent and interesting play, and should not be missed. The plot turns on the story of a slum doctor who discovers a cure for an obscure disease that threatens to destroy mankind. He offers the cure to the

world in return for universal peace. This is refused him till the last act, and then it comes too late, as the doctor, being manhandled as a pacifist, dies with his secret undisclosed.

Oscar Homolka is superb as the doctor—his performance gives to the play a distinction and quality that over-rides any weakness in the plot. In the part of the Marshal, which he also plays, he is not quite so successful. He is inclined to overact, and thereby fails to be entirely convincing. There is a weakness here in the play itself, for the Marshal, a great leader of men, is shown as being a coward in the face of death by disease, behaviour obviously entirely foreign to his character. The play is exciting and deserves a long run. Felix Aylmer and C. V. France are first rate in their parts, and most of the minor parts are well acted. The last scene is not well produced, the crowd is badly handled, lacking life and movement. It would be more effective if the doctor entered pursued by a hostile mob, and the curtain should fall immediately on his death. At present the end is an anticlimax to an otherwise excellently produced play.

THE SOWING of *Wild Oats* at Princes Theatre is a gay and glorious affair of dance and song and uproarious laughter. Full and enthusiastic houses are the order of matinées and nights, and there seems every likelihood of the piece maintaining its popularity for months and months to come. The team work is splendid throughout, allowing for none of those slack periods, not uncommon in musical comedies, where the audience's interest is apt to flag. With a trio such as Sydney Howard, Arthur Riscoe and Vera Pearce to take charge of the supply of hilarious entertainment, with Josephine Houston (a delightful importation from America) and her opposite number, Jack Donohue, to dance and sing with grace and charm, and with a well-trained and beautifully dressed chorus to delight the eye and please the ear, what more could any musical comedy audience want? The plot may be thin, depending as it does on the winning by two members of one village family of two £20,000 prizes in a football pool. But it suffices to take us on a bright and merry round from Little Giggleswick to London, Paris, the Tyrol and Africa and then back again to Yorkshire.

FRED ASTAIRE'S new picture at the Regal is disappointing. The film has been adapted from Mr. P. G. Wodehouse's story, "A Damsel in Distress" and, though Burns and Allen fire off a lot of absurdities, the humour throughout is very thin, and the pace is very slow. Fred Astaire, as usual, does some splendid dancing, and his personality remains as engaging as ever, but something more than this is needed to fill out an hour and a half. On the face of it the plot should have proved acceptable to both sides of the Atlantic, for three Americans go to the rescue of an English damsel in an English castle, but the fun never quite gets going and, inevitably, one comes to the conclusion that the sooner Fred Astaire returns to Ginger Rogers the better for his future.

Leading Articles

THE EASTER PACT

THE conclusion of the Agreement between Great Britain and Italy will be as warmly welcomed in this country as it has been in Italy. Only the most muddled sentimentalists will dissent and continue to preach the gospel of peace at any price and war with all Fascist countries, hoping piously that good intentions will somehow reconcile the opposites. The loss of our traditional friendship with Italy was one of the most gratuitous pieces of blundering of which our foreign policy has ever been guilty. Our rulers followed a current of public opinion which was hopelessly misinformed as to the limitations of the League of Nations. Propaganda had persuaded many Englishmen that the League might guarantee general peace and the thesis was all the more acceptable, because it seemed to relieve us of the sacrifices that our own defence demanded. In point of fact, as events showed, the League was far more likely to cause war than to ensure peace. Japan gave the first warning of the feet of clay on which the League stood and its powerlessness was exposed to the world. Then the Abyssinian question arose. No one has ever denied that Abyssinia was a barbarous country ruled on principles which in other circumstances would have filled our sentimentalists with fury and disgust. Italy took up "the white man's burden" in Ethiopia with very much the same motives as led this country to similar action elsewhere in the world. The League, thanks mainly to the righteous indignation of its fanatics in this country, was persuaded to make a further demonstration of its feebleness and the attempt to impose sanctions effected nothing but the estrangement of Italy from what might now be called the London-Paris axis. Italy was thrown into the arms of Germany and the chief concrete result of sanctions has been the sudden and alarming absorption of Austria, a consummation which the supporters of sanctions bewail more loudly than any other section of opinion.

However, it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good and we do owe a debt to Signor Mussolini for bringing Great Britain face to face with facts and making the whole nation realise the very unpleasant consequences of unilateral disarmament. We found our position in the Mediterranean jeopardised and our main Imperial communications threatened. If the discovery had come a year later, the knell of the British Empire would have sounded, but happily our weakness had not become absolute impotence and there was time to restore our strength, though we have had to pass through a period of rebuke and humiliation which it is not pleasant to remember. Those who brought us to this unhappy pass can well boast of their achievement; they encouraged the wretched Haile Selassie to a hopeless resistance and are responsible for the deaths of many Abyssinians and brought the whole of Europe within an ace of

war. The symbol of their folly, their cap and bells, has been the refusal to recognise the conquest of Ethiopia, knowing all the time that recognition was inevitable. The refusal only served to keep us at loggerheads with Italy, though our interests and traditions demanded that we should make up the quarrel as soon as possible. It was not for us to throw stones at the successors of the Roman Empire for following their ancestors' and our example. It is to be feared that our self-righteousness would have been less assertive, if it had not been for one of our insular failings, an inclination to belittle other nations. If our rulers had realised how quickly and efficiently the Italians would dispose of Abyssinian resistance, they might have been wiser. Not the least satisfactory feature of the present Agreement is that it is signed on equal terms by the two Empires. As the *Times* says, "it should lay the foundation of a fresh and lasting understanding, on terms of perfect equality, between Great Britain and the new Italy."

The value of the Agreement depends no doubt on the spirit in which it is put into operation and one hopes that this is the reason why our Socialist leaders have already dubbed it as a bad bargain. Perhaps they wish to commend it to the Italians as a good bargain from the Italian point of view to increase its popularity in the Peninsula. Certainly the interests of the Empire have never been the foremost plank in the Socialist programme. Every Treaty that is based on fundamental and enduring interests is sure to be operated in a spirit of friendship and understanding. Nothing could be more unnatural than the suspicions that arose between this country and Italy. It is hard for us, sated with Empire, to understand that patriotic Italians really believed that we were preparing to jockey them out of what they had made their own by conquest, hypocritically, for our own advantage. We may hope that this suspicion has now been finally laid to rest. Justice and the acceptance of facts as they are seem to be the guiding principles on which the definition of zones of influence and the proposed settlement of doubtful boundaries have been based.

The friendship of England and Italy is no tender plant of recent growth. Centuries ago the discovery of Italy was the greatest event in a young Englishman's life and it was not the fault of Italy if the novelty of its sun and beauty was more than some of them could bear, giving cause unhappily to the saying "un inglese italianizzato è il diavolo incarnato." Italy went to the head of such Elizabethans as Robert Greene with disastrous effects. In our own day a knowledge of things Italian is one of the first essentials of a liberal education. Throughout the period of tension, Italians have shown no personal hostility to English visitors and the cheers of the Rome crowd after the signing of the Agreement were a spontaneous testimony to the endurance of the traditional sympathy between the two nations. Italy perhaps owes us a grudge, because in the sincerest form of flattery she adopted institutions which work well enough in the country in which

they were contrived, but are hopelessly unsatisfactory in a country which has not grown up with them. The Italian Parliamentary system was a caricature of what we regard as a democratic form of government and no one who wishes Italy well can regret its disappearance. A totalitarian government would not suit this country, but fortunately the Duce has no mind to foist one on us. The Fascist régime is one that springs from ideas deeply rooted in the Italian character. It is easy to trace its origins long before the War. "Italia farà da sé" was something more than an expression of Italian determination. It meant that Italy once again a nation and not a mere geographical expression would work out for itself institutions fitted to its character and genius. It was granted to Signor Mussolini to incarnate the true Italian spirit and to establish in his country an order as truly national as our own institutions in ours.

FARMERS AND DEFENCE

NOT one farmer in England is aware what his own contribution to the defence plans should be. The Government are content to spend enormous sums on armaments, air raid precautions, gas masks for cattle and horses and even the erection of new railway termini in London. But the effect of hunger and of the fear of famine would do even more to wreck the moral of the civilian population in any future war than the unknown effects of concentrated air raids, and yet no steps whatever are being taken to increase the production from English soil.

The Food (Defence Plans) Department, under the direction of Sir Henry French, is making careful plans for the distribution, rationing and buying of food. The report of the Department will be published within the next few days, but I understand that it will deal exclusively with plans to come into operation in the event of an emergency. The report will contain no suggestions for increased production in the meantime. It is only too clear that the Government's point of view is still that put forward by the *Times* some three months ago: "We should necessarily have to look to overseas sources for a big proportion of our food supplies." Yet it is well known that the available tonnage for bringing food from abroad is less than it was in 1914, and that in the next war the duties of the Navy in convoying food ships should be reduced to a minimum.

The immediate attention of the Government should be directed towards two main considerations, the first of which is the problem of increasing the production. The fertility of English soil has sadly deteriorated during the last few years, and plans for improving it should be put into instant execution. In Germany and Italy this question of fertility has the constant attention of the Governments, but in England the only recent attempt to arouse interest was a prize essay competition instituted by the Imperial Chemical Industries. The suggestions made by the competitors were intelligent in the extreme, and show that the level of knowledge is high. With a lead from the Government much could be achieved, and what is now private opinion might be used to the national advantage.

There are more than fifteen million acres of grassland which could be converted into arable land, yet nothing is being done. The importation of mutton from abroad makes it scarcely worth the farmers' while to keep sheep on their grassland, and this means of fertilisation is being lost with the result that great tracts of land are becoming daily poorer.

But even when the question of restoring fertility is solved the problem is not ended. Farmers must be informed exactly as to what is expected of them, and their own views as to what is practicable should be received with care. Even as things are, the figures published by the Ministry of Agriculture show an increase in all directions, especially as regards fruit and vegetables. But it must not be forgotten that the population of London depends entirely on imported meat. It is impossible to avoid a certain proportion of imported food, but this proportion should be reduced to a minimum.

The second great problem is that of storage. The Government is commonly believed to be satisfied with the present accommodation, and recent remarks from Sir Thomas Inskip in the House of Commons would suggest that nothing further is being done for the time being. This view is a corollary of the Government's determination to import large quantities of food when the emergency arrives. Clearly if we produce little food in this country there is no purpose in vast storage schemes. Yet we may be permitted to hope two things: first, that the necessity of using every available acre for production will be perceived, and secondly, that the very close relation between production and storage will not be forgotten.

ROBERT COLVILLE.

RIVERSIDE ROMEO

IT was still daylight, for the last red rays of the westering sun were burnishing the branches of the willows and filling the stream with a wine-red glow. Somewhere, high in the branches of an elm, a lone blackbird was trilling his evening hymn and from the hedges, newly covered with their garb of greenery, came fussy flutterings as the sparrows prepared themselves to roost. Down by the stream it was very quiet for no birds roosted in the pollard willows which lined its banks and the small animals which lived there were not wont to advertise their presence, for their foes were many.

But all at once, something dropped with a plop into the pool beneath the tiny bridge. The ripples blurred the surface of the pool and vanished and beneath the surface moved a shimmering form. It was a water-vole, commonly but wrongly known as a water-rat.

At the bottom of the pool it landed on a ridge of gravel and ran swiftly over the rounded stones to the cover of the bank and now it could be seen that its nose was blunter than that of a rat and its tail shorter. Beneath the overhang of the bank the vole sat up and made its toilet. This took only a short time and then it ran back over the gravel to a boggy spot where reeds and greenery grew in profusion. It selected a juicy piece of cress and sat up on its haunches to eat, holding the cress between its dainty forepaws as a squirrel does a nut. Its little meal was soon done, and then once

again, it groomed itself. Then it scuttled off down-stream as though on some definite quest.

There was a roadway beside the stream. A road not made by hands but by the constant pressure of countless tiny feet, for it was the track used by all the dwellers by the stream-side. At intervals it was joined by other small paths and at each of these the vole halted and tested the air with his nose.

A sharp "tu-whit, tu-whit" rang over the water and the vole froze into immobility for the sound was the hunting cry of the barn-owl, that dread enemy of all the rodent race. For long he crouched there in the shadows, expecting every moment to hear that menacing call above him. But it did not come and with renewed courage he ran on but this time with greater caution. On he trotted through the reeds and sedges and all the time the faint elusive scent was in his nostrils, the scent of a female vole.

He came to a point where the stream narrowed and here, for the first time, he caught another scent which filled his heart with fury and made his hair bristle on his back for it was the scent of a rival, also in search of a bride. Filled with anger at this unwelcome discovery the vole dashed forward heedless of all dangers. All that he wanted was to come to grips with the interloper. Over sand and shallows he dashed, up the bank and down and all the time that hateful taint was in his nostrils.

He was dashing down the bank when something struck him a blow on the shoulder and knocked him headlong into the stream.

Breathless and shaken and with his foe on top of him he had really no chance at all. He put up as good a fight as he could but needle teeth were deep in his shoulder and razor-like claws were ripping at his soft stomach. He squeaked with impotent rage as his opponent forced him under the surface of the water.

So it was that he did not hear the menacing hunting-cry; nor did he see the silent, shadowy shape which drifted as softly as a snowflake down to the waters edge. He did not hear the one painful squeal his rival gave as the curved talons squeezed out his life and lifted him into the air. Even when, battered and bleeding, he crawled from the river and looked around for his antagonist, he did not know that it was his enemy the barn-owl which had saved him.

He sat down and licked his wounds and tried to groom his dishevelled coat. But all at once he stiffened and backed against the bank for a vole was running towards him. Was it his rival returning to end the battle? Next moment his fear left him and he resumed his toilet, seemingly unheeding.

The female vole ran up to him and laid her nose upon his back. He paid no attention to her. Again she touched him, muzzling him with her little black nose. He got stiffly to his feet and squeaked softly. She crouched before him submissively. As though that settled the matter the riverside Romeo drove his new-found bride before him towards the burrow which was to be their home.

DAN RUSSELL.

The Inner Man

MORE QUERIES

THE following questions as to the Art of Good Living, which have been submitted by our readers, will be answered next week by the Wine and Food Society:—

"I.C.S." is troubled about omelettes. She wants to know why those that her cook makes usually approximate to a pancake and whether there is any difference of principle between the French and English omelette. Also she would be glad of the recipe for Crêpes Suzette, which she regards as the perfect pancake. She adds that, as one who has to entertain a good deal, she has found that both food and wine are better appreciated if the host or hostess is able to explain the special virtues of the hospitality he or she is offering.

A letter from British Columbia brings an inquiry about strawberries. Victoria, Vancouver, boasts of a strawberry crop which lasts longer than in any other accessible place in the world, but our correspondent admits that the berries are rather lacking in flavour as compared with their opposite number in the Old Country. She is anxious to know whether there is any concomitant other than cream, which will add to their attraction. She has tried Maraschino, but found that it drowned the taste of the fruit. A further question asked in this letter deals with the famous Canadian blue berries. The writer was astonished to hear a visitor from overseas assert that they were exactly the same as the whortleberries of Surrey or the whinberries of Scotland except for their absence of taste.

A Norfolk letter asks for particulars about mead and metheglin. Is it true that mead is still brewed in many parts of Great Britain? If so, where and how can it be obtained? What exactly is metheglin? A Devonshire reader asks for a definition of Athol-brose.

A Yorkshire reader raises the problem of cheese and apple pie. He is surprised to find that this combination is unknown in the South, and calls on those who profess the Art of Good Living to pronounce it not only justifiable but meritorious.

A letter from Surrey raises the question of the globe artichokes, which are just coming to us from abroad. He is extremely fond of them, but has never found a wine which will go with them. They are apt, he says, to turn the aroma of the fermented grape into inky murkiness, and he suggests that possibly some of the more lurid Dominion wines might stand up against their company, though he has never ventured to make the experiment.

A lady in the Isle of Wight is interested in capers. She wants to know what scientific historians would term their provenience and is not certain whether their acrid but charming flavour is compatible with a light white wine.

Letters to the Editor

PEACE IN SPAIN

Sir,—There is a growing body of opinion in this country which quite logically, in my view, believes that a Franco-controlled Spain will not represent a menace to the British Empire. The reason is that Nationalist Spain, when victorious, will require financial aid to rehabilitate the country. Neither Germany nor Italy can provide the wherewithal: Great Britain can. She should, therefore, be able to come to terms with General Franco which will be of mutual benefit.

It may be idle to speculate as to the nature of the settlement, which must be made sooner or later, since the matter is in capable hands with Mr. Chamberlain. It may, however, be presumed that any agreement will recognise France's need of security, because, if France becomes involved in trouble and is attacked, our treaty obligations and our own safety will force us to participate in any subsequent war.

According to moderate Frenchmen with whom I have discussed the matter, one of their main fears is that they will be hemmed round by Fascist Powers, and will be forced to defend strongly another totalitarian frontier. This has led to serious consideration of Professor Keynes' recent suggestion that peace and security might be established if it were possible to establish neutral states on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, to form a buffer between Nationalist Spain and democratic France.

The states already exist in Catalonia and the Basque country. Both are strongly nationalist and neither has any strong bond with Republican Spain—except as regards their own autonomy. Granted such comparative independence in the peace settlement, it is unlikely that they would do anything to disturb the arrangement. They should serve, therefore, as a neutral buffer, which would allay mutual fears, and enable France and Nationalist Spain to live side by side without undue friction.

It would be interesting to hear the views of those directly concerned—not only Britain and France, but also Italy, Germany and Franco—on the potentialities of such a scheme.

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GERMANS IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

Sir,—One indication of the British Government's foreign policy which is certainly attracting widespread public support is the effort to secure an amicable agreement between Germany and Czecho-Slovakia over the German Minorities' problem in the last-named country. Our own responsibility for the establishment of so many arbitrary national boundaries at the end of the Great War is an added argument in favour of our now attempting to remove the menace to peace

represented by the racial problems which are one of their most unfortunate results.

It should be remembered, too, that there is no small danger that similar errors may be committed when the question of a settlement of the present Spanish war comes up for consideration. At least as acute as the present controversy over German Minorities in Czecho-Slovakia would be the inevitable claims to recognition of the Catalan and Basque Minorities, supported by clear-cut racial and historical precedent.

Without the patronage of a power looming as large in British foreign policy as the German Reich, it is doubtful whether the above-mentioned races could force their claims as effectively as the Suedeten Germans upon the conscience of the world. But it is to be hoped that the principle will be accepted as one of essential sanity, not to say expedience, if and when the time should come for Britain to declare her policy in the matter.

F. P. CABOT.

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PALM SUNDAY

Sir,—Christianity had a long history previous to the publication of the Book of Common Prayer, and it may be taken for granted that the name of Palm Sunday had so impressed Christian society with its appropriateness that even the very iconoclastic achievements of the religious innovators of the sixteenth century could not blot it out.

The name is to be found in the twilight of history; in the fourth century on the Sunday before Easter there was a triumphal procession into Jerusalem, of which an account exists; in the seventh century Palm Sunday was kept in a special way in the churches of Gaul and Spain. Pecock, a Welsh bishop, writing about 1450, mentions the custom of having a procession on the "Palme Sundai before masse." And, as a matter of fact, in mediæval England, as in the Roman Church to-day, there was a special service known as the Blessing and distribution of the Palms, during which the story of the entry into Jerusalem was read to the congregation. The mass follows and in its gospel goes on to the account of the Passion.

In the sixteenth century the innovators, either because they regarded the blessing of the palms as superstitious or because they disliked rites and ceremonies, omitted the first service. Bucer, for instance, who no doubt influenced Cranmer, objected to "scenic" practices and considered that ancient ceremonies should be cut down as much as possible.

This is why in the morning service on Palm Sunday in the Church of England there is no mention of the procession into Jerusalem. Blunt, in his "annotated Book of Common Prayer," says that the "oversight"—but was it an oversight?—is much to be regretted.

T. PERCY ARMSTRONG.

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Books of The Day

THE JAPANESE CASE

IF anyone should be able to put forward a fair case for Japan's war with China, it would, one might have thought, have been that well-known Japanese author and propagandist, Mr. K. K. Kawakami, who has already written a vigorous and on the whole soundly-reasoned defence of Japanese policy in Manchukuo. Mr. Kawakami knows English well and has a forceful, persuasive style which at once commands his readers' interest. In the book he has just written on the Sino-Japanese war ("Japan in China," John Murray, 5s.) he has fortified himself with a foreword by Viscount Ishi and introductory notes by Sir John Tilley and Captain Lord Sempill. Yet when one has read all these prefaces and pondered all Mr. Kawakami's specious arguments one is left with the impression that Japan's case against China must be singularly weak if this is all that can be said in its favour. Viscount Ishi recalls his own experiences in China during the Boxer outbreak, as if they really had much relevance to the present war between China and Japan. Mr. Kawakami asks us to believe that China for years past has been pursuing a Machiavellian policy of embroiling an innocent Japan with other foreign Powers, deliberately, for example, selecting the international settlement of Shanghai for staging a conflict with Japan. He produces a wealth of documentary evidence to prove (what no one seriously disputes) that for many years Russian influence was extremely powerful in the counsels of the Kuomintang, and he then goes on to state categorically, without advancing any proof that the statement is true, that General Chiang Kai-shek bought his liberty after the Siam *coup* by pledging himself to carry out the demands of the Communists. He sees no inconsistency in depicting Japan both as the zealous suppressor of Chinese Communism and as the victim of unprovoked hostilities, and rather unhappily for the moral side of his argument makes no little play with the cynical plea that China, after all, may be the means of monopolising the greater part of Japan's export trade and thus lessening her activities in other markets. Mr. Kawakami's book will, one is sure, be widely read because of his reputation as a Japanese propagandist; but that it will succeed in winning many converts to the cause he champions one may beg leave to doubt.

D'ANNUNZIO: AN INTIMATE PORTRAIT

The brief period that has elapsed since the death of Gabriele D'Annunzio might suggest that any book about him to make its appearance at this time must be the result of speedy compilation by an enterprising journalist spurred on to the work by an equally enterprising publisher. But there has been nothing hasty about the putting together of Mr. Tom Antongini's absorbingly interesting book of personal memories of the Italian poet and

genius ("D'Annunzio," Heinemann, illustrated, 15s.). It was begun as long ago as 1919 and has been added to at different intervals in the intervening years. It speaks of D'Annunzio throughout in the present tense as if he were alive and as if his dominating personality were still there to dominate everyone and everything, just as in a sense it dominates this book. Mr. Antongini was for thirty years closely connected with D'Annunzio as his secretary, his publisher and his intimate friend. The intimacy of his relationship has by no means destroyed the spell D'Annunzio exercised upon him, for all Mr. Antongini's claim that long familiarity has somewhat lessened "the magic suggestion, the almost hypnotic seduction of his (D'Annunzio's) words and all that surrounds him." The whole book is refutation of that statement. It is as the wondering, awe-inspired, if slightly troubled, disciple of the Master and in no spirit of depreciatory criticism that Mr. Antongini records all these minute details that go to the making of his complete and intimate portrait of the man. Nothing is too trivial for him to note and to put on to paper. Thus:

He has a mania for ices, and, if he is unobserved, is capable of swallowing ten or twelve in rapid succession. It has been reported that during his first stay in Rome he ordered lemon ices and caviare served together, but I am certain that he could only have done so for the pleasure of watching the expressions of those about him.

When he writes his mouth is affected by a superabundance of salivation, which he wipes away with a handkerchief (there are always four or five within reach) clutched in his left hand, which rests on the paper upon which he is writing.

Then, again, he has to tell us of D'Annunzio's collection of animals, while being "unable to determine to what degree D'Annunzio actually interests himself in the life and habits of inferior animals." He notes the liking the poet once took to a small goldfish, and he has a delightfully amusing tale of a musical bittern, which unfortunately committed the *bêtise* of walking out of the room when Malipiero began to play, D'Annunzio quickly intervening to assuage the artist's injured feelings with the remark that the bird was merely leaving on tiptoe! Mr. Antongini also tells us how this master of words and ideas proceeded to his creative work; how out of the fast-flowing stream of words and ideas pouring from his lively brain, one idea would gradually detach itself and seize upon his attention; how he would then start to read and make copious notes; and, finally, how in the next stage of a month or more

D'Annunzio does not take up his pen even to make the most insignificant entry. He re-reads the notes he has written, turns over the leaves of some book and, above all, goes for walks and rides, or indulges his bent for meditation. His relations with the people who approach him are reduced to a strict minimum. Even the reigning mistress, if she happens to inhabit his house, becomes, for the time being at least, of secondary importance. . . . At the end of this period of mental activity the new work is virtually completed and from the intellectual point of view the book is as good as written.

Mr. Antongini, while clearly having no sympathy with D'Annunzio's numerous amatory adventures, defends him from the charge of

invariably living on the women who loved him. For the rest he can only explain him as "a sensualist in the fullest sense of the term. He has ever taken pleasure where and when he has found it." He was "never willing to believe that love can make a woman suffer" and quite "capable of witnessing the most poignant manifestation of feminine sorrow with as little compunction as a dentist feels for a nervous patient."

SMUGGLERS OF TO-DAY

One is apt to look upon the eighteenth century as the era *par excellence* of the romantic smuggler. But romance is by no means lacking in the extensive and far more expert smuggling that goes on to-day over all the national barriers of Europe and indeed in other parts of the world. There are Scarlet Pimpernels dealing in the conveyance of human contraband from peril to safety; there are not wanting instances of Robin Hoods who hand over their illegally acquired gains to the poor and needy. Mr. Geoffrey Pinnock, who has made a close study of the ways of the modern smuggler in different parts of Europe and who has written a dramatically thrilling book out of what he has learnt from smugglers and customs officers, sets out both the brighter and less pleasant sides of modern smuggling ("Dark Paths," Nicholson & Watson, illustrated, 10s. 6d.). He confesses to having found "some delightful and gentle characters" among the contraband runners whose acquaintances he has managed to make, and he dwells sympathetically on the courage, tenacity and resourcefulness displayed by the majority of the smuggling fraternity, not omitting, of course, to point out that there are moral as well as legal issues involved in their operations.

Drug-running is the worst form of modern smuggling, and Mr. Pinnock cites instances of this loathsome traffic both in the Alpine regions and in England. He devotes one of his chapters to human contraband and another, the final one, to the smuggling of forbidden newspapers into Italy. And as an example of the modern Robin Hood, he offers us the story of "*König Niemann*" (King Nobody)—said to be an ex-Prussian officer who took to a smuggling life in disgust of militarism. The particular line which this famous smuggler favoured was the running of cattle and horses into Germany from across the Czechoslovak border at the southern end of the Bohemian Forest range. For years he successfully evaded the *Grenzpolizei*.

König Niemann made big money by his cattle-running; and after he had paid his band their wages nearly everything he had went to the poor peasantry or was spent in anonymous charity. He had no home of his own, but every peasant hut was open to him. Towards the little village of Finsterman he showed special interest, for the peasants there had once hidden him while the police were close at his heels.

In the terrible lean years of 1928 and 1929 the whole population of Finsterman was living on the starvation line. Tax gatherers threatened fifty evictions if the long-due arrears were not met. When *König Niemann* heard of this he stole through the village at night, entered every house and asked what taxes were owed and paid the authorities from his own pocket on behalf of the villagers.

He met his death in 1934 as the result of a visit to the sick bed of a man who had once befriended him and who was badly in debt. After comforting his sick friend and leaving money to settle his debts, he started on his return journey, only to be shot down by a party of *Grenzpolizei* who had come across his tracks in the snow and were waiting to intercept him.

In his comprehensive survey of the whole European smuggling field, Mr. Pinnock mentions many curious features, such as the employment by smugglers not only of trained smuggler dogs, but of armoured cars over the Franco-Belgian frontier and the use of a submarine in the River Lys at the point where it forms the frontier of Belgium. He gives us the stories of several famous smugglers, and illustrates his book with actual pictures of smugglers taken at the moment of achievement or capture. So far as this country is concerned, he puts forward the opinion that "professional smuggling is on the decrease at the moment," but adds the less comforting statement that "to stamp out smuggling altogether in Great Britain, a high Customs official informed me, would cost £12,000,000 a year and require a preventive force of seventy thousand men."

EVOLUTION OF THE NAVY

The Navy of to-day represents only another stage in the process of continual evolution that has been going on for over two thousand years of building ships of war, ever since King Alfred, in fact, first realised the necessity of protecting his coasts from persistent invaders. It has been for centuries Britain's "sure shield and defence" in the words of King George V on the outbreak of the Great War; or, to quote the famous preamble to the "Articles of War" of Charles II, "it is upon our Navy, under the good providence of God, that the safety, honour and welfare of this Realm do chiefly depend." The story of its evolution then, from the carved tree-trunks and woven osiers of King Alfred's day to "The Great Harry" of our most married Sovereign down to the infinite variety of present-day types of warships, must be of special and peculiar interest to every Briton, be he sailor or landlubber. And surely no better or more attractive way of displaying the various stages of that evolution could be found than that which Lieut.-Commander Rowland Langmaid has chosen in his book, "*The King's Ships Through the Ages*" (W. H. Barrell, Portsmouth, and Simpkin Marshall, London, 21s.). Here we have a carefully compiled epitome of Naval history, illustrated with some 28 beautiful coloured plates reproduced from original water-colour drawings. Stage by stage the Navy's progress, from Saxon war-galley to the *Hood*, is set out in the letterpress and illustrated in the pictures that accompany it. Another pleasing feature is a full-page illustration containing silhouettes to scale of all the ships in the book, so that their relative sizes may be seen at a glance. Each of the 28 coloured pictures is mounted on neutral tinted paper, and the whole book is bound very charmingly in half-blue Persian leather, lettered in gold. In short, not only is this a valuable and instructive book of reference, but a genuine

work of art which its possessors will have every reason highly to prize. His Majesty the King, one learns, has very graciously accepted a copy.

TRAVEL BOOK MISCELLANY

Those who liked the curious mixture served up in the "Letters from Iceland," in which Mr. Louis MacNeice had a hand, will probably welcome and enjoy the latest travel book miscellany that Mr. MacNeice has composed after visiting the Hebrides. It is called "I Crossed the Minch" (with eight drawings by Nancy Sharp, Longmans, 10s. 6d.). It is a packet of literary All Sorts. The Hebrides come into it, but much of it might have been written anywhere. Hetty of the Iceland Letters duly makes her appearance. Interlarding sections of the author's journal are poems and parodies, dialogues between the author's head and foot and between himself and his guardian angel, a letter from Hetty and alarums and excursions by the author's familiars, Percival and Crowder. The poems are unquestionably the best part of the book, and the following lines appear to sum up Mr. MacNeice's impressions of the islands:

On those islands
Where no train runs on rails and the tyrant time
Has no clock-towers to signal people to doom
With semaphore ultimatums tick by tick,
There is still peace though not for me and not
Perhaps for long—still peace on the bevel hills
For those who can still live as their fathers lived
On those islands.

A LIFEGUARDSMAN'S STORY

Mr. R. A. Lloyd was for ten years, from 1911 to 1921, in the 1st Life Guards. He had his share of war service, which was cut short by the severe wounds he received in an air raid just before the German offensive of 1918 started. As a result he had to spend two years in hospital. He started his military career as a trooper and rose to no higher in the regiment than Corporal of Horse. He had qualified for a commission in the Machine Gun Corps, but this was refused him in accordance with the custom of his regiment. In 1921 he became a sergeant instructor in the new Army Education Corps and was attached in that capacity to the Welsh Guards, his old regiment, and the Royal Horse Guards. Thereafter he took his degree at London University and left the Army, obtaining a post as master in a secondary school. He has now written a book ("A Trooper in the 'Tins,'" with an introduction by Major J. J. Astor, Hurst & Blackett, 12s. 6d.) setting out his reminiscences as a war and peace-time soldier. This makes pleasantly entertaining reading, since the author writes well, has a keen sense of humour and a faculty both for vividly picturing the soldier's life in peace and war, in barracks or billets, and for hitting off amusingly and sympathetically the characters of his comrades, human or equine. He has much to tell us of his own horse Herbert, and incidentally causes his reader to wonder why another horse in his squadron that was notorious for his tricky temper should have been selected for King George V to ride in France—with the consequence of a serious accident for its Royal rider.

NEW NOVELS

Mr. Robin Hyde gave us a striking character and a realistic story of the War in his "Passport to Hell." The same character "Starkie" reappears in the post-war New Zealand tale "Nor the Years Condemn" (Hurst & Blackett, 8s. 6d.). Of half Scottish and half Red Indian blood, "Starkie" has a reckless, but good-hearted way with him that extorts the reader's keen interest and sympathy with him for all the scrapes into which and out of he manages to get. The War, in which his bravery secured a strong recommendation for the Victoria Cross and in which his recklessness also earned him a dose of imprisonment as well as wounds, has left its mark on him physically, yet it is the same Starkie who pursues, in a world not altogether suited to war heroes, his trouble-encountering course, a thoroughly lovable character for whom all his old comrades have a warm affection. A fine story this, for all its underlying tinge of bitterness, and one that has the further attraction of presenting us with a vivid picture of the New Zealand scene in the post-war "bust and boom" period.

Miss Moyra Charlton, who, at the age of eleven, made her bow as the author of a delightful book, "Tally Ho," has now written her first full-size "grown-up" novel. It is an ambitious venture—a historical romance written round the Regency and Peninsular War period. "One Man in his Time" (Putnam) is a well-written, colourful tale, which displays considerable power in character-drawing and description and in which the historical background of Regency London and the Spanish war is filled in with light but deft touch.

Mr. Deeds went to Town, and Nadia Horne, the heroine of Mr. Clarence Buddington Kelland's latest book, "Spotlight" (Arthur Barker), forsook the world of the Four Hundred and of Fifth Avenue for Broadway with surprising and not altogether pleasant consequences. However, the story of the adventures that befell both her and her grandfather, the old but sprightly General, who encouraged her in her social revolt, provides a vast amount of entertainment to the reader and much scope for the author's wit and satire. It is a lively, swift-moving comedy without a dull moment in it.

In her preface to "One of His Majesty's Subjects" (Selwyn & Blount), Miss Mary Sturt tells us that it is a true family history in so far as all the incidents are founded on fact, and as she brings the story down to the present day she naturally provokes an obvious train of speculation. The story is of the children and descendants of Mme. de St. Laurent, the mistress of the Duke of Kent, who was Queen Victoria's father. It is an episodic history of succeeding generations and is inevitably for that reason a little disjointed. But that is a small matter after all, more than set off by the vivid and vivacious manner in which Miss Sturt presents her various episodes.

The author of that exceptionally good crime story, "The High Sheriff," Mr. Henry Wade, has selected as the hero of his new novel, "Here Comes the Copper" (Constable), a young policeman with an observant pair of eyes and a faculty of remembering all he has seen. We follow his

adventures first in London and then in the country, to which he has been transferred owing to his wife's state of health. Mr. Wade furnishes him with plenty of opportunity for making excellent use of his powers of observation and his well-trained memory. This very human policeman sleuth is an agreeable change from the average amateur criminologist whose exploits are apt to be more startling than credible. Mr. Wade gives us a convincing portrait of the ambitious young policeman and an excellent tale of his sleuthing adventures.

"I Can Get It For You Wholesale," by Jerome Weidman (Heinemann) is a highly piquant slice from American life—not the kind of book, as an American reviewer put it, "for your sweet old aunt." Decidedly not, unless she is very modern. It no doubt carries its moral, throwing as it does a lurid light on the ways of the unscrupulous swindler who is always on the look-out for "suckers." And its young Jew, Harry Bogen, the quondam "poor slob from the Bronx," who reveals himself and his methods so frankly, is perhaps a fair type of a certain commercial section in New York which prides itself on its excessive "smartness."

In the brief preface to his latest novel, "This Publican" (Ward, Lock) Mr. Dornford Yates says that "some of my customers may complain that they asked of me a fish (Berry) and I have given them a serpent (Rowena). I have only the maddening, if time-honoured, excuse to offer, that for the moment I am out of fishes, but am expecting more shortly." It is good to know that there

may be a return of Berry and Co. in the not distant future, and in the meanwhile, if Mr. Dornford Yates has no sparkling Berryisms to offer us, he at least gives us an interesting and very readable tale based on the doctrine that "those alike in body are also alike in mind." It may seem a little far-fetched that doctrine, but by putting it into the mouth of a dying Judge who sees a strong resemblance between his daughter-in-law (the said Rowena) and a woman he had tried many years ago for perjury—"the foulest, most treacherous lies that ever a woman told"—Mr. Yates makes it appear both reasonable and sound. And, of course, the Judge proves to be absolutely right in his estimate of Rowena as "a brilliant vampire, who's clever as sin, whose heart is of frozen iron" and who is destined to make his son miserable. He has made provision in his will for what he holds is bound to happen, and the trustee he appoints zealously carries out his behest to the ultimate undoing of an unfortunate marriage. It all makes an excellent tale as Mr. Yates unfolds it—even when it comes to making use of the woman whom the Judge had convicted of perjury to turn the tables on the lying Jade, Rowena.

PUBLISHERS' PLANS

From Black's will be coming on May 4 Professor A. J. Sargent's "Seaports and Hinterlands."

Early next month Longmans will be bringing out the second and completing volume of Dr. Gooch's "Before the War: Studies in Diplomacy."

During the present summer the Oxford University Press expect to publish Professor C. K. Webster's new work on "Britain and the Independence of Latin America."

Cassell's have in preparation Dr. Philip Gosse's "St. Helena, 1502-1938."

From Methuen will be shortly coming another book on the Oxford University Arctic Expedition of 1935-36. This is by Mr. A. S. T. Godfrey and is entitled "The Cradle of the North Wind."

OTHER NEW BOOKS

"Slavery Through the Ages," by Lieut-General Sir George Macmunn (Nicholson & Watson, 10s. 6d.).

"African Mirage," by Hoyningen-Huene (Batsford, with numerous illustrations, 12s. 6d.).

"A History of British Foreign Policy," by Ian C. Hannah (Nicholson & Watson, 4s. 6d.).

"Political Arithmetic," edited by Lancelot Hogben (Allen & Unwin, 30s.).

"An Editor Goes West," by Leonard Crocombe (Harrap, 8s. 6d.).

"To-morrow's Star: An Essay on the Shattering and Remoulding of a World," by L. Cranmer-Byng (Golden Cockerel Press, 7s. 6d.).

NOVELS

"Courthouse Square," by Hamilton Basso (Methuen).

"The Cat and the Medal," by Mollie Carpenter Hales (Methuen).

A new murder book by

**WARNER
ALLEN**

Times Literary Supplement: "The name of the author will at once tell the reader what to expect—in short, a book full of wit, rich in incidents and ingenious in design."

"Mr. Warner Allen has chosen for his background the home and political life of Roger d'Arblay, bitter opponent of the French premier, Allard. Public and private intrigues lead to a series of tragedies."

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"DEATH FUNGUS"

Constable

Round the Empire

RELEASE OF PRISONERS IN INDIA

IN the question of the release of so-called "political" prisoners in India several important issues have been involved, as both the Viceroy and non-Congress Ministers in some of the provinces have pointed out. Among other things, it is not always easy to differentiate between the prisoners' politics and their unhappy tendency to indulge in serious and dangerous crime for its own sake. Then, again, the wholesale release of prisoners involves a grave reflection on the judiciary that has condemned them, and must tend, if persisted in, to undermine judicial prestige and authority. Finally, once the principle is accepted that the Executive has the right to release prisoners, whatever their crimes may have been, it is impossible to tell to what lengths this exercise of Executive privilege may be carried.

Already there have been some startling developments in this matter of Ministerial leniency. The *Calcutta Statesman* gives us two instances, where this extra-judicial Executive action has caused excitement and dismay—even in Congress circles. The first instance was in the Central Provinces, where an obviously "non-political" prisoner was suddenly released. It is said that in this particular case the release was sanctioned by one Minister without the knowledge of the C.P. Cabinet and that this so aggrieved his fellow Ministers that a reference to the Congress Working Committee was found necessary. The prisoner, who was a senior educational officer in Government service, was involved in the sensational "Wardha rape case" which caused comment all over India last year. The allegations were of the utmost gravity and the High Court did not reduce the sentence of three years' rigorous imprisonment which a lower court awarded. At the moment of his release he had spent barely a year in jail. "He is now a free man and rumour has already installed him in an educational post in an Indian State." The second instance was in Bombay where a great deal of excitement was caused by the suspension for a fortnight of the sentence of imprisonment on two prominent business men who had been convicted of offences under the Gambling Act. "Public feeling in that Province," says the *Statesman*, "can be gauged from an adjournment motion in the local Assembly, strong leading articles in local newspapers and a resolution by the Liberal Association."

In Bengal where a non-Congress Ministry is in power the Government has been constantly assailed for its reluctance to agree to a wholesale jail delivery. This is the province which in the past has been the headquarters of terrorism in India. That fact is notorious. Yet Congress advocates of wholesale release have of late been making great play with the argument that conditions in the province have completely changed and that there is now no danger of a recrudescence of terrorist activity. No credit is given to the

Bengal Ministry for its gradual abolition of detention camps and for its release of nearly 2,000 persons who have some claim to be regarded as "political" prisoners. What the Congress critics of the Ministry demand is that every detenu should be given his freedom at once.

A full answer to Congress arguments was recently given in the Bengal Assembly by the Home Minister, Khwaja Sir Nazemuddin. There was, he said, not the slightest ground for holding that the atmosphere, so far as terrorism was concerned, had considerably improved. Secret organisation had not been given up; hidden arms were still in existence, and there was no tangible proof beyond mere statements by individual prisoners, that the path of violence had been definitely abjured. Past experience showed that wholesale release of detenus and political prisoners resulted in a recrudescence of terrorism. Was it suggested that terrorist outrages had never occurred or that the Intelligence Branch had given false reports? The plea of trust had been raised by the Opposition. But what was the picture before them? Writings in the Press and speeches from the platform continued to laud detenus and political prisoners as heroes and martyrs. A demonstration was staged in Calcutta, demanding the release of detenus and political prisoners. A large number of college and school students participated in it and this showed that the youths of Bengal were again being contaminated. If it was the intention of the House that the Government should continue their policy of progressive release of detenus and political prisoners it was necessary that they should take reasonable precautions against a recrudescence of terrorism.

INDIAN ARMY MECHANISATION

The distinction of being the first fighting units of the Indian Army to be completely mechanised has fallen on the 13th D. C. O. Lancers and the Scinde Horse which, it is announced, are shortly to be converted into armoured car units. Both regiments, says the *Statesman*, bear honoured names in the annals of Indian military achievement in the past century and "though there may be sentimental regret at the replacement of their horses there can be no doubt that the exchange will make for far greater mobility and, therefore, increased usefulness in war-like operations. At one time it was felt that mechanisation was not suitable for Indian conditions. Experience of the past decade or more with mechanised transport of certain fighting units of the Indian Army has, however, led to a modification of this view, and with the gradual mechanisation of British cavalry the need for bringing Indian cavalry into line with modern war requirements became imperative. Polo in India may suffer through the unhorsing of two distinguished regiments, but there can be no doubt that the efficiency of the Indian Army as a fighting force will be enhanced by the change."

INDIAN MARBLE INDUSTRY

That the North-West Frontier Province of India is well supplied with excellent white statuary marble and has illimitable quantities of

banded marble suitable for building purposes is the conclusion reached by Dr. A. L. Coulson in a paper published in the records of the Geological Survey of India. He describes the occurrence of marble and dolomite at Ghundai Tarako, a hill forming part of the boundary between the Swabi tehsil of the Mardan district and the Buner tract of Swat in the North-West Frontier Province, and considers that the largest quantities of statuary marble will be found in the Ghundai Tarako.

In a contribution made last year Dr. Coulson described the marble occurrences at the Swabi tehsil and the Khyber Agency, and suggested that, to keep up a regular supply of first-class statuary marble and to develop the marble industry in the province, it was advisable to develop simultaneously the Shahidmena, Kambela Khwar and Maneri deposits. Also every care should be taken, he said, to extract the less valuable, banded, relatively impure marble at the same time as the pure white marble, which at all times will command a market. By doing so, large quantities of good quality banded marble, suitable for tiles, facing, and general building purposes, which would otherwise be wasted, would be available in addition to the statuary marble. These remarks, Dr. Coulson urges, still hold good. He adds that careful selection of sites for development should be made, taking into consideration the type of stone required, and he is of opinion that possibly the best sites will be found in the neighbourhood of the main peak on the Mardan side of the ridge.

BURMA DEFENCE

An interesting discussion took place recently in the Burma House of Representatives on the subject of Defence. One member, Mr. Ganga Singh said that the British Government should bear the cost of Burma's defence as Burma was a peace-loving country, but was likely to be involved in a war "sought by Britain to suit her own end." U Ba Hlaing, a labour member, said that Burma was not secure on the north-east and south. On the north-east border she was within the reach of Japanese planes, while in the south rumour had it that the Japanese and Siamese were planning a joint attack on Burma, for which purpose a canal was being dug across the Isthmus of Kra. U Aye urged acceleration of the policy of Burmanisation of the army. In his view the problem implied two things—Burmanisation of officers, and reduction in number of British and non-Burman troops.

Mr. F. Booth-Gravely, replying on the debate, described Mr. Ganga Singh's ideas of British policy as a monstrous travesty of the facts. He assured U Aye and others who urged Burmanisation of the army that there were limitations of advisability and practicability which had to be taken into consideration. The Premier, in a supplementary statement, assured the House that the Governor had accepted the principle of Burmanisation.

PROTEST AGAINST STATE LOTTERY

The association of heads of Rangoon schools, in a resolution, have protested against the proposal

to hold a State lottery in Burma. The resolution expresses surprise and regret at the proposal to introduce legislation to establish a State lottery and that such a proposal emanates from men who should promote public morality and welfare. The proposal, if enacted, would strike at the very root of such morality and welfare. Referring to the statement that there was a keen desire among the people for a lottery, the resolution questions such a general indictment against the people of Burma and says that the association is unable to believe that the vast majority gamble. The association holds that all thinking people in Burma or elsewhere would endorse a statement made in similar circumstances in another part of the world. "The practice of gambling in all forms is an affront to good government, business, sport, morality and religion."

The association's concern was increased when it noted that the Director of Public Instruction and other highly placed people were connected with the promotion of the scheme. The high position of these people would encourage the habit of gambling especially in the rising generation giving it standing and respectability. It contends that gambling in any form, legalised or otherwise, is an improper means to employ for the support of education as the proposal partly intends. In other places where State lotteries exist only a small percentage of the income goes to public causes and thus, as a means of public finance, lotteries have proved an unsound and wasteful method.

The resolution ends with a plea for public-spirited men and women to oppose the proposal.

A CEYLON "AVIARY"

Sir Andrew Caldecott, Governor of Ceylon, speaking at the annual general meeting of the Planters' Association of Ceylon, held in Kandy, expressed the hope that his silence on most of the points raised by various speakers would not be interpreted either as consent or dissent. "The fact is," he went on, "I do not consider it compatible with the Governor's position under our system of administration that he should pronounce views or utter comments on political issues outside the Ministerial Circle. In public, on political issues, I feel my proper rôle to be that of the owl who lived in an oak. (Laughter.) The more he heard the less he spoke, the less he spoke the more he heard—that constitutional old bird." (Laughter and cheers.)

An amusing comment is made on this speech by "Newsman," the writer of an interesting page in the *Ceylon News* (a new up-to-date weekly which combines all the best features, including illustrations, of those popular Ceylon dailies, the *Ceylon Observer* and *Ceylon Daily News*, and which represents the amalgamations of their respective weekly editions). He writes:—

"Now that the Governor has likened himself to that constitutional old bird, the owl who lived in an oak, one may well wonder whether the seven Ministers would themselves like to be regarded as birds of not quite the same feather. A friend tells

me that whatever reincarnation Mr. Senanayake may hereafter achieve, he cannot be more aptly addressed than in Shelley's immortal line: 'Bird thou never wert!' As for the other six in the ministerial aviary, the rôle of peacock may be easily filled by one, while the remaining five will have to qualify as parrot, raven, hawk, woodpecker or homing pigeon. Don't ask me which is which."

CEYLON AT GLASGOW

The two hundred and one products derived from the coconut will be part of Ceylon's exhibit at the Glasgow Empire Exhibition. The Island's industries will be represented in various pavilions. The Imperial Institute section will feature the coconut with its accompanying products—coconut shell charcoal for gas masks, vinegar, cattle food, desiccated coconut, hair oil, fibre and the many other commodities; the Tea Board's display will show Ceylon tea, metalwork and woodcarving, and in the Women's Pavilion Ceylon's village handicrafts will be exhibited.

SPEAKER AND PRESIDENT

The *Cape Times* draws a contrast between the position and attitudes of the late Speaker of the Union House of Assembly and the President of the Senate in the coming S. African elections. It draws attention to the fact that though Mr. E. G. Jansen, the Speaker, had during his term of office scrupulously kept aloof from party-political strife, he found himself faced with the prospect that his seat would be contested by the Nationalists. "The Nationalists are, in effect, taking an unfair advantage of Mr. Jansen's sense of duty and propriety. In sharp contrast with the odds which are forcing the Speaker into political battle is the conduct of the President of the Senate, Senator C. A. van Niekerk. Unlike Mr. Jansen, Senator van Niekerk has no seat to defend. Yet he has gone out of his way to embroil himself in party politics. He addressed a political meeting at Oudtshoorn and 'appealed to the electors to support the Nationalist candidate.' It is a great pity that Senator van Niekerk should have allowed his personal views to run away with him to this extent. It has long been known that he sympathises with the Nationalist Party, but that in itself is no more a ground for reproach than is Mr. Jansen's membership of the United Party. By his appeal to the voters of Oudtshoorn, however, Senator van Niekerk has shown himself to be forgetful of the dignity and the duties that belong to his position as President of the Upper House—duties which, though imposed by an unwritten law, as strongly stamp some actions as improper as they insist on the performance of others. Senator van Niekerk should remember that he occupies a high office in the political body, and that indiscretions on his part may reflect on the honourable traditions of which he is the representative."

WANTED, DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The fourteenth annual report of the Joint East African Board comments on the need of a clear policy of development for the East African terri-

tories. The following are extracts from the report:—"Declaration of a policy of development by the Imperial Government would provide the best means of stimulating the Eastern African Governments and private enterprise alike to push ahead the development of the resources of the territories. The agricultural and commercial communities and business interests engaged in the various industries of the territories are sometimes faced with a lack of continuity in Government policy, and are hampered at times by difficulties due to inadequate co-operation and encouragement on the part of the Administration. It would seem almost an axiom that, having spent a sum of £37,000,000 on railway and harbour construction in the four East African territories, the Governments should be anxious that full use should be made of the facilities provided and should do all in their power to promote production. The initiative in the matter of actual schemes and proposals for development should as a rule come from East Africa, and the Board appreciates that the Economic Development Committees in the different territories are constituted largely for the consideration of such schemes. Particular reference should be made to the responsibility of the Colonial Office in connection with certain industries in East Africa which are controlled by international restriction. In regard to these it is felt that more effective guidance should be available from this end, and that the interests of any particular industry and the effect of restriction on its development and on the prosperity of the territories in general should be more fully studied before international agreements are reached.

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MACMILLAN

In this connection the Board would refer to the large potential market of Native consumers in East Africa, and would deprecate any policy of commodity restriction which does not safeguard the fullest measure of development of internal production for local consumption."

A STRANGE HARVEST

Canada reaps a great annual harvest of ice—not in terms of the winters of which some commentators write so vividly, but in terms of ice specially cut in order to supply a real demand. Take the case of Saskatchewan. Electrical refrigeration and all the latest up-to-date apparatus being used in cooling systems throughout the Province have as yet caused no diminution in the need for this strange harvest. In fact, the total tonnage cut and the number of permits last year issued for commercial and private usage shows an increase over the previous year. Permits submitted to commercial firms and for domestic consumption during the 1936-37 season totalled 421, compared with 293. The number of tons taken up last winter amounted to 59,123, as compared with 48,343 tons harvested during the 1935-36 season. The majority of this ice is used in hospitals, hotels and restaurants, railway refrigerator cars, creameries, meat packing plants, and in homes.

ELECTRICITY IN CANADA

Canada is already one of the most electrically-minded nations of the world and has spent many millions of pounds in exploiting the water-power resources of which she is abundantly endowed. Still further developments and extensions are promised for the coming year. The depression years resulted in a closing down of capital expenditures, but so marked has been the improvement lately in the demand for electrical energy that the industry now finds it is faced with the necessity of adding to installations in order to take care of the anticipated further improvement. A survey of the situation shows that there are nearly eighteen major developments under way or in prospect. Alberta, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are the only three provinces which do not report a project. British Columbia reports the largest number, but Quebec leads in point of importance. In that province St. Maurice Power Co., jointly owned by Shawinigan Water & Power Co. and Brown Corporation, has started work on a 160,000 h.p. development which will involve a capital outlay in the neighbourhood of £3,000,000. While the new developments represent a large amount of capital they by no means cover the total expenditure which the industry has in mind for this year. Several millions will be spent on transmission and distribution lines to

meet the greater demand. For example, Ontario Hydro built nearly 2,000 miles of distribution line last year and its programme this year will be equally as large. Other companies are extending their systems as fast as conditions warrant, particularly in the rural areas.

NIGERIA'S SOUND POSITION

While Nigeria's trade figures for 1937 were eminently satisfactory and exports reached a figure (in value £19½ millions) higher than has ever before been reached, the steady fall in commodity prices and the serious drop in receipts from duties that have latterly taken place have caused the Nigerian Government anxiously to consider the colony's financial position.

As Sir Bernard Bourdillon, the Governor, explained to the Nigerian Legislature at the opening of the Budget session, the Government were faced with the prospect of just over a quarter of a million drop in customs revenue and had to choose between a policy of wholesale retrenchment and restriction of services and one of merely marking time. They had decided on the latter course because the prudent financial policy they had pursued had placed the Colony in a position to weather the depression. During the last three years they had created a Special Reserve Fund of £500,000; increased surplus balances by £586,940; paid £560,000 into the Supplementary Sinking Fund, and paid £852,251 into various renewals funds.

"The net result of all these transactions," said Sir Bernard, "is that our reserve position is almost exactly two and a-half million pounds stronger than it was three years ago. In addition to these measures of repair we have assumed, as ordinary annual obligations, a payment of £260,000 into the Supplementary Sinking Fund, payments of £70,000 and £23,902 to the Marine Renewals Fund, and the Water and Electricity Renewals Funds respectively, and we have given a total annual relief to the railway of £290,658, which has enabled them to bring their renewals fund up-to-date and to make regular payments thereto. We have, in short, made payments amounting to two and a-half million pounds, and accepted annual commitments amounting to nearly £650,000, all with the object of strengthening our liquid reserve, improving our public debt position, and keeping our capital assets up to full value. . . . The Government is thus beyond question in a sufficiently strong position to be able to adopt the 'marking time' policy which other considerations indicate to be the proper one to pursue."

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RECOVERY AND THE BUDGET

WHEN political developments may at any moment shatter confidence, market recovery is a precarious procedure. Yet with the Budget to look to at the conclusion of a three-week holiday account substantial improvement has set in. Still more significant is the lead given by British Government stocks and particularly the short-dated Funding loans which have gained several points to a level where the redemption yield is only in the neighbourhood of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Naturally, the market strongly suspects the imminence of a fresh Government borrowing and if conditions are propitious, a new British Government loan would meet with a good reception.

But fresh borrowing to finance the armament programme has more significance than the mere piling up of debt. There are those who argue that every scrap of Defence expenditure should be met from additional taxation. This at a time when there is a natural inclination to question trade prospects would have a severely deflationary effect. If the Government decides to proceed with substantial fresh loans to avoid further taxation of industry, it is surely a "bull point" for industrials. And the market is beginning to realise this.

TOWARDS HIGHER VALUES

Failing political upsets, the trend of all ordinary stocks and shares should be towards higher values for huge Government expenditure the world over must ere long result in the full use of the extended credit supplies provided by devaluation of currencies and writing up of gold. If one follows this to a logical conclusion, a colossal "boom" looms up on the horizon, but inflationary only in the sense that currency values still need much violent adjustment before the pre-1931 equilibrium is re-established. So far this upward tendency has been checked entirely by lack of confidence and almost entire abolition of international trading. Given a measure of confidence sufficient to allow of a reasonable restoration of commercial intercourse between the leading countries of the world, one can only imagine a vast prosperity wave. Indeed, such a trade movement is the alternative to an armament race which can only end in calamity.

BEER AND TOBACCO

Re-examining Budget influences, one finds the market confident that additional taxation will not be imposed on beer and tobacco. Brewery shares, in fact, have been one of the firmest sections of markets and some attractive yields are offered. Bass at 126s. are £1 above the lowest, yet they still yield $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. gross on last year's 25 per cent. tax-free dividend. Benskin's Watford Brewery at 80s. yielding 5 per cent. is also a good investment rightly fancied for a progressive future since its properties are in the growing Hertfordshire and

Bucks residential areas. A little known share is that of Associated Breweries whose North-East industrial area of operations is likely to yield increasing profits for some years, at any rate. At 32s. 6d. the shares give scope for appreciation.

Tobaccos are in rather a different sphere. Imperial Tobacco are reckoned by many to be Britain's soundest industrial. Hence every satisfaction should be felt with the yield of £3 12s. 6d. net of £4 16s. per cent., less tax, which the £1 units offer at 615-16. A lower-priced attractive share is the 5s. Carreras "B" at 18s. 9d. yielding about $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

FRIENDLESS RAILS

Home Railway traffics have not lately provided a straightforward comparison, owing to the incidence of Easter this year and last, but it would appear that they are not quite so satisfactory as had been hoped for. But they are holding their own against very good figures last year and only wages fears can be responsible for the friendless state of the share market.

COMPANY MEETING

ARMY AND NAVY STORES, LTD.

THE annual general meeting of the Army and Navy Stores, Limited, was held on the 19th inst. in London. Brig.-General Sir Frederick Gascoigne, K.C.V.O., C.M.G., D.S.O. (chairman and managing director) who presided, said:

When I addressed you last year I finished my speech by reminding you that the year 1936 was abnormal in that it contained fifty-three trading weeks, whereas in the year 1937 we should only have fifty-two trading weeks. Notwithstanding this reduced trading period we have more than maintained the gross profit earned in the longer year, though the net profit is down by a little over £9,000. No less than £8,833 of this reduction is accounted for under the heading of rates and taxes.

Moreover, a full year's contribution to the Employees' Retiring Allowance Fund was borne for the first time, and this, with the Coronation bonus, added a further £8,000 to our working costs. Without these additional expenses, amounting to nearly £17,000—one of which is non-recurring—we should have again shown an increased net profit, which, with the shorter trading period at our disposal, would have been a better result than I encouraged you to look for when I addressed you last year.

You will remember that at our last meeting we were considerably worried about the National Defence Contribution. This tax has cost us about £6,000 for the ten months, and will cost us more for the full year.

In spite of the extra expenses entailed and the consequent decline in our net profit the fact remains that we still had a good year and your Board, after careful consideration, came to the conclusion that in all the circumstances they would be justified in again recommending payment of the bonus on the present occasion, and we therefore propose to allocate £88,833 to provide a final dividend of 10d. per share plus a bonus of 3d. which, with the interim dividend of 5d., will make a total dividend for the year of 1s. 6d. per share, or 15 per cent. Having dealt with the business in India and the demolition and rebuilding of the Howick Place buildings, he concluded by saying:

We have got a sound balance sheet, good reserves, an establishment which is getting more and more up-to-date every year, both in its structure and the services it provides, and it only requires the continuance of ever-increasing development of your good will to ensure the maintenance and progress of its prosperity.

The report was unanimously adopted.

THE NATIONAL Review

Incorporating the English Review

Vol. 110. No. 662.

April, 1938

Episodes of the Month

The Urgent Question

By SIR EDWARD GRIGG, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., M.P.

The Quart Measure and the Pint Pot

By VICTOR WALLACE GERMAINS

Berlin to Ballyhooley

By PAT

Pax Japonica

By J. O. P. BLAND

Will Juggernaut Survive?

By W. J. BLYTON

"The National Review" Luncheon

The Imperialist Faith in Canada

By PROFESSOR HERBERT L. STEWART

Matthew Arnold

By ALFRED AUSTIN

Poem: Vox Senectutis

By E. LE BRETON MARTIN

The Gentle Art of Dosing

By MOIRA DESMOND

The World of Your Blackbird

By RICHARD PERRY

A Rain Guide for the British Islands

By THE LORD DUNBOYNE

Sport

By F. G.

Correspondence: F. Slocock, E. H. Blakeney, etc.

Books New and Old:

Gabriele d'Annunzio

By ORLO WILLIAMS

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